NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
NEWS ANALYSIS NO. 1-0843 MAY 26, 1976
WILLIAM LEAVITT

MEMORIAL DAY 1976

(ADVANCE FOR HOLIDAY, MAY 31)

ANNCR:

MONDAY (MAY 31) IS MEMORIAL DAY IN THE UNITED STATES, A TIME AMERICANS, EACH YEAR, PAUSE TO HONOR ALL THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES IN WAR FOR THEIR COUNTRY. VOA NEWS ANALYST WILLIAM LEAVITT HAS THESE OBSERVATIONS.

VOICE:

THEY WALK QUIETLY INTO THE CEMETERIES, BEARING FLOWERS AND PAINFUL MEMORIES OF LIVES CUT SHORT, TO THE GRAVES OF SONS AND DAUGHTERS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, SPOUSES, FRIENDS. FOR SOME, THE WOUND OF LOSS IS ALL TOO FRESH. TOO LITTLE TIME HAS PASSED SINCE AMERICANS WERE DYING IN INDOCHINA. FOR OTHERS, TRAGEDY IS FROZEN IN HISTORY. THOSE THEY MOURN DIED IN NEARLY-FORGOTTEN CONFLICTS: KOREA, THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

FOR AMERICANS, ON THIS AND EVERY MEMORIAL DAY, ALL THOSE WHO DIED COME ALIVE IN MEMORY AND ARE WRAPPED IN LOVE.

THIS PAUSE TO REMEMBER IS A UNIVERSAL IMPULSE. IN DIFFERENT WAYS, DIFFERENT CULTURES HONOR THEIR DEAD.

BUT THE FEELING -- WHEN IT COMES TO WAR -- IS THE SAME EVERYWHERE. PEOPLE ASK: HOW CAN MAN ROOT OUT THE CURSE OF CONFLICT? NO ONE KNOWS THE ANSWER. BUT THE SEARCH GOES ON. IN A NUCLEAR WORLD, THERE IS NO CHOICE. EVERY CONCEIVABLE APPROACH TO LASTING PEACE MUST BE EXPLORED, EVERY WAY TO REDUCE TENSIONS, EVERY WAY TO BROADEN THE PATHS OF FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD.

PROGRESS TOWARD THESE GOALS SEEMS AGONIZINGLY SLOW. YET THE SLOW MARCH PROCEEDS. EFFORTS TO ADVANCE ARMS CONTROLS, INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUES TO MEET THE THREAT OF HUNGER, MEETINGS OF HEADS OF STATE, INCREASED EXCHANGE BETWEEN PLAIN PEOPLE WHO LIVE UNDER SHARPLY DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS, CULTURAL PROGRAMS THAT UNDERSCORE THE UNIVERSALS OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE. . . ALL THESE MAY SEEM FRAIL EFFORTS. YET EACH, IN ITS OWN WAY, CONTRIBUTES TO THE HOPE THAT, SOONER OR LATER, THERE WILL BE NO NEED FOR MEMORIAL DAYS TO SALUTE YOUNG LIVES CUT SHORT BY WAR.

GH/RCS